Welch Speaks Out: Negroes Raise 'Phony Issues'
Beck, Paul
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Welch Speaks Out: Negroes Raise 'Phony Issues'

BY PAUL BECK
Times Staff Writer

The entire civil rights movement is part of a Communist blueprint to establish a "Negro Soviet Republic in the Southeastern United States," the founder of the John Birch Society declared here Monday.

This blueprint, said Robert Welch at a press conference, was laid out in 1929 by Communists who said then that "Negroes in the South are to be considered exactly as if they were a colony of suppressed natives."

The object is to "stir up trouble and demand an independent Negro republic . . . and then advance the Communist cause," Welch said during the hour-long question and answer session at the Statler Hilton.

Called 'Phony Issues'

Welch charged that claims of Negro oppression are "phony issues" and that only a very small minority of Negroes in the South are denied their voting rights because they are Negroes.

"I wouldn't say that there are no places where Negroes are handicapped in voting," Welch said, "but where they are it is minor."

Repeating his claim that Dr. Martin Luther King is a "hypocritical troublemaker . . . who has been trained by the Communists," Welch said in answer to questions:

"I doubt that King is a Communist. But I have no way of knowing. He is doing things that support the Communist cause."

Leadership Unknown

The founder of the ultra-conservative society said he also did not know if King is the real leader of the civil rights movement.

"What they (the Communists) want is the trouble created by it," he said.

"And King is deluding the Negroes into thinking they are mistreated more than they are."

He added that is the plan conceived by Communists to drive a wedge between Americans and assist the Red takeover of the United States.

Violence and disorder, he said, are the tools the Communists use and have found successful.

Asked who trained Dr. King, and where, Welch replied:

"He was trained at the Monteagle school in Tennessee about eight years ago. The records on the people running it are quite clear."

Charges Denounced

(In 1963, Sen. A. S. (Mike) Monroney (D-Okla.) denounced charges that Negro civil rights leaders consorted with Communists. Bruce Bennett, attorney general of Arkansas, told a Senate hearing King had been photographed in 1957 at the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tenn., a school later closed by the state on grounds it was subversive.

(Monroney said King admitted he had made a Labor Day speech at the school in 1957 and the senator added, "That doesn't make him a Communist sympathizer.")

Asked for names, Welch responded that "I can't anticipate what names might be wanted. I can't carry them in my mind."

Later, the society's public relations director, former Congressmen John Rousselot, interjected that one of King's associates was Carl Braden, a former Louisville Ky., newspaperman sentenced to a year in prison for contempt of court after refusing to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Acitivities.

The purpose of the John Birch Society, Welch said, is to inform Americans.

"And if we can get Negroes informed (about the alleged Communist plot) it will be harder to terrorize them," he said.

"But there is a danger they (the Communists) will be successful. All this trouble is Communist inspired."

He also said that claims of Negro oppression "are phoney issues. The percent oppressed is so tiny that the damage done is ridiculous."

Asked what role the Black Muslims and the black nationalist movement play in the civil rights struggle, Welch replied: "I don't know what the story is behind that. Where the whole movement fits in, I don't know."

Welch also charged that "an awful lot of what is happening (in the South) is being distorted by the press."

He cited the picture of a police dog straining on a leash to attack a Negro as one example of distortion.

"It was a framed picture. The Negro's trouser leg had been cut by a razor so it would tear off when touched. It was a play-acting fraud with the whole idea of putting something over on the American people.

Welch, asked about state police using gas and beating Negro marchers in Selma, Ala., on Sunday, said he could not comment on the situation there on the basis of newspaper or television reports.

In response to a question, he said there are "many reasons" for "distortions," but that he could not go into the motives behind them.

Welch, in Southern California for three speeches he

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VIEW FROM THE RIGHT—Robert Welch makes point, left, at Statler Hilton press conference, then pauses from barrage of questions to light a cigar.
Times photos

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BIRCH FOUNDER

Continued from First Page

said would raise about $10,000 for the society, also told newsmen:

1—"There has been considerable pressure from members to demand an investigation (of the society). Goodness knows, I have no objection to it and it might be helpful to the society."

2 — There is a large amount of Communist infiltration in Washington, "but I can't put my finger on specifics . . . I can't tell you who or what. The Communist influence in Washington is powerful enough to have our government taking steps favorable to the Communists. It's not my function to name names and I'm not qualified to do so. It is up to the government to find out who they are."

3—The eventual result of American policy in Vietnam will see that country fall to the Communists "so it doesn't appear we pushed it. We don't know what the right course is at this time, but I have faith that if we can wake up the American people it will help . . . to arouse public opinion and reverse this picture."

4—The John Birch Society "was not connected in any way" with an affidavit seeking to damage the reputation of Sen. Thomas Kuchel (R-Calif.). "We refused an ad for a book written by (Francis A.) Capell," one of four indicted in the case.

5—The society may not agree, but "if properly identified, I don't see anything wrong" with permitting Communists to speak on college campuses.

6—About 40% of the society's membership is Catholic and there are all-Negro JBS chapters, and many integrated ones. "There is absolutely no secrecy" in the organization and it is not anti-Semitic, anti-Negro or anti-Catholic.

7—If the society can expand its membership sufficiently to put chapters in 325 of the 435 Congressional districts, "the educational process would be enough to get conservatives elected in those districts."

Welch speaks at 8 p.m. today at Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Culver City, followed by 8 p.m. speeches Wednesday at Santa Ana High School and Thursday at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

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Ex-Policeman Sentenced for Robbery Role
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Ex-Policeman Sentenced for Robbery Role

A former Santa Ana police captain and private attorney was sentenced by an Orange County Superior Court judge to seven years imprisonment for his part in a $500,000 armed robbery of a Newport Beach jewelry store.

Frederick E. Hopper, 51, was sentenced by Superior Court Judge James O. Perez following a surprise statement this week by Hopper that he was guilty of the robbery last March of the Brett-Walker jewelry store in Fashion Island.

As a result of Hopper's plea before jurors, Perez declared a mistrial, which will allow another trial for Hopper's alleged accomplice, Hugh Coughran.

Perez sentenced Hopper to three years for the armed robbery, two years for using a gun, and two more years for loss to the jeweler in excess of $100,000.

Hopper had gained notoriety in Orange County in 1964 when he was fired from the Santa Ana Police Department after being accused of misconduct, insubordination and other department violations in connection with an alleged John Birch Society chapter.

He was reinstated by a personnel board but later left the department.

While a Santa Ana lawyer, he was sentenced in Reno in 1976 to five years in federal prison for helping a bank robber escape from jail. He was on parole from that sentence when the robbery occurred.

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Fire Bomber Sent to Jail
Los Angeles Times (1923-1995); Sep 2, 1965; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times
pg. 33

Fire Bomber Sent to Jail

A former John Birch Society member whose hatred for communism drove him to fire-bomb a book store was sentenced Wednesday to nine months in jail.

William Howard Jamison, 27, formerly of 10133 San Antonio St., South Gate, had been found guilty of arson for tossing two Molotov cocktails at 2:30 a.m. March 23 into the Progressive Book Shop, 1806 W. 7th St. Damage was about $1,000.

He was quoted as saying he "considered it a gathering place for Communists and a place where Communist-inspired literature was sold."

Jamison quit the John Birch Society two weeks earlier because of a "difference of opinion over tactics." After the bombing he confessed what he had done to his former chapter leader, who turned him into police.

He also was quoted as saying he intended to gather followers and "hide out in the hills to conduct guerrilla warfare."

Before passing sentence, Superior Judge Edward C. Olson reduced the charge to attempted arson.

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Rights Parley Breakup Blamed on Hate Groups: Torrance Meeting Forced ...
Los Angeles Times (1923-1995); Aug 19, 1963; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times
pg. 20

Rights Parley Breakup Blamed on Hate Groups

Torrance Meeting Forced to Adjourn When Hecklers Shout Down Speakers at School

Members of right-wing organizations and hate groups were blamed Sunday for breaking up a civil rights meeting Saturday night in Torrance.

The meeting, sponsored by the Centinela Bay Human Relations Committee, was just getting under way at Torrance High School when shouting and booing hecklers disrupted the program.

Speakers, including state and county officials and Negro and Mexican-American community leaders, were shouted down by about 40 hecklers whenever they tried to speak.

Torrance police Lt. Douglas C. Cook adjourned the meeting an hour after it started because the hecklers would not allow the speakers to talk, but it was reconvened minutes later at the insistence of most of the audience

Six Speakers Heard

Three of the six speakers finally talked, though most were drowned out by boos, hissing, hand-clapping, shouting and coughing. The speakers were Kenneth Thomas, attorney for the United Civil Rights Committee; Anthony Rios, Mexican-American vice president of the Community Services Organization, and Dept. State Atty. Gen. Robert Burke.

Lawrence Lucks, area supervisor of the State Fair Employment Practices Commission; Julius Klein, of the County Commission on Human Relations, and Gerald Herrington, assistant state real estate commissioner, were unable to speak because of the disorder.

Charles F. Catterlin, city prosecutor in Torrance and the moderator on a panel designed to inform the audience of about 400 about civil rights legislation, estimated more than 35 members of the John Birch Society and several members of the American Nazi party invaded the meeting.

Catterlin said the hecklers accused the sponsoring group of having a Communist as its founder and continually shouted at speakers, asking if they were Communists.

"A woman dressed in red, white and blue walked up and down the rows slamming seats up and down. They've also developed a neat trick of everybody coughing. It's pretty hard to hear a speaker when 35 or 40 people are all coughing at once," he said.

Lt. Cook said he had no personal knowledge that hecklers were Birch members, although persons at the meeting told him they had overheard hecklers say they were members.

The lieutenant said police offered to assist anyone who wanted to make a citizens arrest of hecklers, but that no one offered to do so.

Carl B. Pearlston Jr., chairman of the meeting, said hecklers sought to link the entire civil rights movement as a Communist plot. Anti-Communist and anti-Negro literature was handed out by the intruders, he added.

'Organized Effort'

Anthony Rios, Mexican-American vice president of the Community Services Organization and one of the speakers, said the demonstration was "an organized effort to keep people from expressing their views and reaching the public."

Julius Klein, a consultant to the County Human Relations Commission and another scheduled speaker, said the hecklers "took a leaf from the Communists" in using the tactics they did to break up the meeting.

Meanwhile, 14 pickets demonstrated again Sunday at the Southwood Riveria Royale tract in Torrance.

All were served with court orders requiring their appearance in Juge Alfred Gitelson's court next Friday for a hearing to determine if a restraining order regarding picketing should be made permanent.

A total of 38 pickets were served the papers over the weekend. The pickets carefully observed the terms of the restraining order calling for them to march 10 ft. apart and to occupy no more than half the sidewalk. Sit-ins are prohibited.

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Birch Society Members Tied to Smuggling of Illegal Drug
By EVERETT R. HOLLES Special to The New York Times
New York Times (1923-Current file); Jun 1, 1976; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times
pg. 18

Birch Society Members Tied to Smuggling of Illegal Drug

By EVERETT R. HOLLES
Special to The New York Times

SAN DIEGO, May 31—Leaders of an alleged international smuggling conspiracy say that members of the John Birch Society have been prominent in "spearheading" the promotion and distribution of the illegal drug Laetrile to American cancer sufferers and their doctors.

In interviews the alleged conspirators identified as members of the right-wing organization four of the eight Americans indicted last week by a Federal grand jury here for smuggling the contraband drug into this country from Mexico and selling it at huge markups. They indicated that there were probably other society members among the other four suspects.

Group Formed in 1972

Several of those indicted said in interviews over the weekend that many other persons dealing in the drug had been recruited from the society founded by Robert Welch in 1958. These persons were said to be distributors or among the nearly 1,000 physicians allegedly administering it to cancer patients.

Robert W. Bradford, 45 years old, who is one of the persons indicted and a life member of the Birch Society, said that the involvement of society members with the drug occurred "because our belief in basic constitutional rights and freedom of choice coincides with John Birch principles. The John Birch influence has been a tremendous help in spearheading our movement," he said.

Mr. Bradford was arrested by customs agents last Dec. 20 and charged with having 3,900 vials of Laetrile worth $40,000 at wholesale in his car. He is a co-founder and president of the Committee for Freedom of Choice in Cancer Therapy set up around a nucleus of John Birch members in 1972 in Los Altos, Calif. The committee says it has 28,000 members in 415 nationwide charters.

The John Birch Society's district governor for 13 Western states, Charles Armour of San Marion, Calif., said that John Birch publications such as American Opinion and Review of the News had pressed for the legalization of Laetrile and had denounced the Food and Drug Administration's efforts to suppress it. Laetrile, pronounced LAY-a-trill, is produced from an extract of apricot pits and is rich in cyanide.

Mr. Armour said that while many of the society's members may be involved in the Laetrile traffic their activities were wholly without sanction of the society.

"The society itself is in no way involved in smuggling or distributing Laetrile," he said. "Although we have publicly defended the basic right of doctors to treat patients according to their professional judgment, including the use of Laetrile, we have neither encouraged our members to use or not to use the drug."

19 Named in Indictment

The Federal indictment announced last week named 19 defendants. They included two Laetrile-producing plants and a distribution concern in Tijuana, Mexico; seven Mexicans associated with the operation, and a British entrepreneur accused of directing the multimillion dollar smuggling conspiracy.

Reports that $130,000 of Mafia money was funneled into the Laetrile operation at one time were confirmed by the accused British leader of the smuggling ring, Andrew R. L. McNaughton, who has been involved with the controversial drug for years.

His McNaughton foundation for "Laetrile research," to which he said the Mafia money had been given, operated first in Montreal, then in Sausalito, Calif., until 1971, when the California authorities cracked down ono clandestine Laetrile laboratories. He then shifted his activities to Tijuana.

A "large but undetermined number" of John Birch members are believed to be among 33 unindicted co-conspirators named by the Federal grand jury, according to a member of the 10-man task force of the Justice Department Customs and Postal Services and California Department of Health, who spent a year tracing the conspiracy.

The unindicted co-conspirators include doctors, distributors in several states and women operators of boarding houses on the American side of the border that allegedly served as "drops" for the distribution of Laetrile by mail, air express and courier, using bogus return addresses.

Books Endorsing Drug

Books and articles defending Laetrile's effectiveness are prominently displayed for sale by the Birch Society's bookshops around the country.

Reprints of pro-Laetrile articles by such John Birch writers as Alan Stang, Gary Allen Dan Smoot and others are widely distributed by national organizations such as the Committee for Freedom of Choice. These organizations either openly supply the drug or direct members to doctors, clinics or distributors where it is available.

An Assistant United States Attorney, Herbert B. Hoffman, who directed the grand jury investigation, agreed with Mr. Armour that although John Birch members were highly active in the illegal traffic no evidence had been brought to light of any involvement by the society itself.

Laetrile is also known by its pharmaceutical name, Amygdalin, and as Vitamin B-17 and Nitrosilide, as well as a variety of trade names including Kemdalin, Cyto H-3 and KH-3. Its importation and interstate shipment and sale have been prohibited since 1963, by the F.D.A., which has called Laetrile a "cruel hoax" and a worthless nostrum having no demonstrated value in alleviating cancer.

The drug is also illegal in Canada but it can be manufactured legally and used in cancer therapy in 24 countries.

Its defenders generally prefer to call it Vitamin B-17 to disassociate it from classification as a drug. They contend that the F.D.A. is acting illegally in banning what is actually a megavitamin whole-body food supplement. They say that the supplement is not sold as a "cancer cure" but that it has proved effective in holding the spread of malignancies, relieving pain and prolonging life.

Four Cited as Members

A spokesman for the freedom of choice committee identified four John Birch members among the eight indicted Americans and said "there undoubtedly are others." The four he named, all of whom acknowledged their membership are:

Dr. John A. Richardson, 53, of Albany, Calif., arrested three times for alleged Laetrile trafficking since 1972 but never convicted. He has acknowledged giving hundreds of patients Laetrile injections as "a vitamin supplement."

Mr. Bradford, a former scientist with the Linear Accelerator Facility at Stanford University who set up the committee in 1972 to create support for Dr. Richardson following his arrest on smuggling charges.

Frank Salaman, 51, of Redwood City, Calif., a co-founder of the committee and its vice president.

Ralph S. Bowman, 48, of El Cerrito, Calif., business manager for Dr. Richardson and an accused smuggler. The four other indicted Americans are Guido Orlandi Sr. of Burlington, Vt.; Frank J. Spolnik of Hammond, Ind., and Donald Eugene Hanson and Donna Grace Schuster, both of Rochester, Minn. None were available for comment.

Among the officers of the Committee for Freedom of Choice, as listed in Choice, the committee publication, all are John Birch members with one exception, according to Michael L. Culbert, the editor of Choice and himself a John Birch member. The exception was said to be Dr. Ernst T. Krebe Jr., of San Francisco, who holds the basic patent on Laetrile and is the committee's scientific director.

Others Linked to Birch

Mr. Culbert said that the Birch officials of the committee, in addition to Mr. Bradford, Mr. Salaman and himself, were George Kell of Modesto, Calif., chief legal counsel; Representative Larry P. McDonald, Democrat of Georgia who is a member of the John Birch National Council and the committee's legislative adviser, and Maureen Salaman, associate editor of Choice and wife of Frank Salaman, the defendant. Representative McDonald openly discusses his use of Laetrile in his practice as a urologist in Marietta, Ga.

Among the unindicted co conspirators were said to be Dr Seymour Weisman, operator of the Sunny Slope Clinic in Phoenix, Ariz., and his wife, Geraldine. Federal agents said that Mrs. Weisman was arrested at the Tecate border crossing near here last October with $4,000 worth of Laetrile and that she was carrying a John Birch membership card. The charges are still pending.

Mr. Culbert, a former editor of the Berkeley Daily Gazette and author of the book "Vitamin B-17, Forbidden Weapon Against Cancer," said, "There are a lot of us Birchers in the Laetrile movement because the John Birch Society has the guts to fight for what it believes in."

Mr. Bradford insists that he and his associates have never smuggled Laetrile although he concedes they have handled great amounts of it. He said, "Government indictments will in no way curtail our activities and we will continue helping cancer sufferers to get to the right doctors and make sure that the doctors have adequate supplies of B-17, which is a natural food agent against which there is no Federal law."

The California Department of Health, in a report to the State Legislature on March 27, stated that the international smuggling of Laetrile was directed by "an ultraconservative organization," which it did not identify but which a department official said "could reasonably be inferred to be the John Birch Society."

Earlier, on June 14, 1974, the Federal Food and Drug Administration's Division of Federal-State Relations issued a memorandum stating: "There appears to be a close relationship between the organization [the Los Altos Committee for Freedom of Choice] and the John Birch Society."

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